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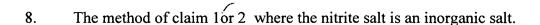
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WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for therapeutically applying NO comprising combining a nitrite salt, a biocompatible reductant and an acid with a pKa between about 1 and about 4 in a medium and topically applying said combination to a body site.)

- 2. A method for topical delivery of nitric oxide (NO) comprising mixing a powdered nitrite salt with a powdered reductant and an acid having a pKa between about 1 and about 4 in a diffusion-inhibiting topically applicable medium and topically applying an effective amount of said mixture to a body site.
- 3. The method of claim 1 or 2 where the reductant is an ascorbate salt, an erythrobate or α -tocopherol.
 - 4. The method of claim 1 or 2 where the reductant is ascorbic acid.
 - 5. The method of claim 1 or 2 where thewhere the acid is an organic acid.
 - 6. The method of claim 1 or 2 where the acid is maleic acid.
 - 7. The method of claim 1 or 2 where the acid is an inorganic acid.



9. The method of claim 1 or 2 where the nitrite salt is sodium nitrite.

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The method of claim 1 or 2 where the medium is an aqueous gel. 10.

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The method of claim 1 or 2 where the medium is an organic salve. 11.

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A topically applicable ointment for controlled NO delivery comprising a nitrite 12. salt, a reductant and an acid with a pKa between about 1 and about 4 in a medium sufficiently viscous to inhibit diffusion, permit slow NO release and facilitate topical application.

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13. The ointment of claim 12 where the reductant is ascorbic acid, an ascorbate salt, an erythrobate or α -tocopherol.

The ointment of claim 12 where the reductant is ascorbic acid. 14.

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The ointment of claim 1/2 where the acid is an organic acid. 15.

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The ointment of claim 12 where the acid is maleic acid.

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17. The ointment of claim 12 where the acid is an inorganic acid.

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18. The ointment of claim 12 where the natrite salt is an inorganic salt.

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19. The ointment of claim 12 where the nitrite salt is sodium nitrite.

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20. The ointment of claim 12 where the medium is an aqueous gel.

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21. The ointment of claim 1/2 where the medium is an organic salve.

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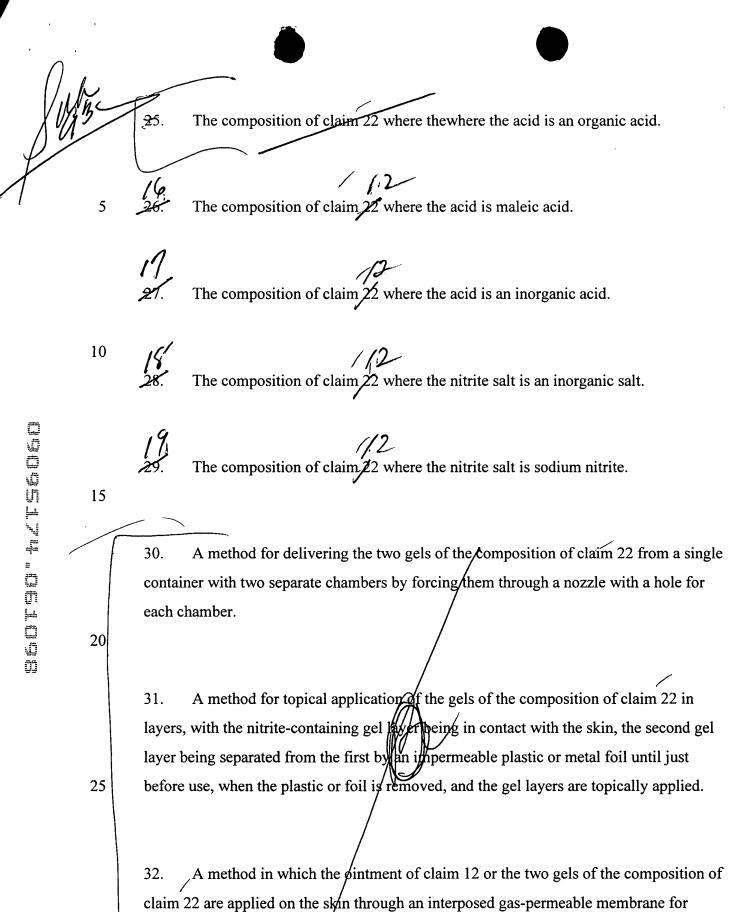
22. A composition for generating and controlling the release rate of NO for topical applications comprising a first aqueous gel and a second aqueous gel, the first gel comprising a nitrite salt, and the second gel comprising an acid having a pKa between about 1 and about 4 and at least one of the first and second gel comprising a reductant.

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The composition of claim- $\frac{1}{2}$ where the reductant is ascorbic acid, an ascorbate salt, an erythrobate or α -tocopherol.

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The composition of claim 22 where the reductant is ascorbic acid.



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lessening any skin irritation/

